

Ocean Diver

Enjoying your diving

Module objectives

When students have completed their Ocean Diver training, they will begin to extend their diving either with a BSAC branch, BSAC centre or on other organised dive trips. They will experience a variety of different dive sites and different diving conditions. This module pulls together what they have already learned and experienced during training and takes it forward because, as qualified divers, they will need to incorporate some of the advice into their planning and diving.

Achievement targets

At the end of this module, students should:

- Know about the different types of dive site and diving conditions that they may experience in the future
- Be aware of the different diving platforms that they may encounter
- Understand the essentials of reef, wreck and night diving
- Understand that reef and wreck divers carry a responsibility to protect the sites for future divers
- Be able to plan for holiday diving, which may take place outside a branch or centre
- Know how to progress their experience once qualified as Ocean Divers

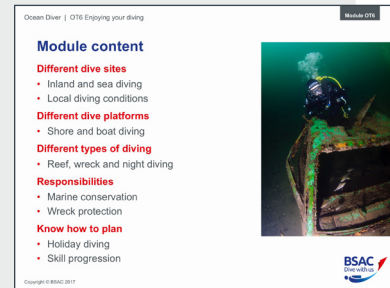
Additional visual aids needed

A diving knife or net cutter, a diving torch, a light stick or strobe light.

Module content

This module considers diving in the different locations and conditions that students may experience as qualified Ocean Divers.

Explain that qualified Ocean Divers will be able to dive with another BSAC Ocean Diver or above within the restrictions of conditions already encountered during training, under the on-site supervision of a Dive Manager (responsible for selecting site, conditions and dive plan), or with a Dive Leader or above to expand their experience.



Enjoying diving as an Ocean Divers

This module covers the following topics:

- **Inland sites**
Inland sites provide a good environment for training and building experience, and diving is possible all year round.
- **Sea diving**
Sea dives are more affected by the weather and local conditions but they offer a huge range of diving opportunities, including wreck and reef diving, and the chance to see much marine life.
- **Diving from shore and boats**
Ocean Divers might dive from the shore or various types of boats. Each diving platform has advantages and disadvantages to consider.
- **Reef, wreck and night diving**
Each type of dive has its attractions and potential hazards. Ocean divers need to be aware of these and the precautions to be used.
- **Holiday diving**
Many divers will dive while on holiday, away from their BSAC branch or centre. Students need to know that some of the practices in these locations may differ from what they have become used to during training.

Responsibilities

BSAC promotes marine conservation and respectful treatment of our underwater heritage. Here you can introduce those policies.

- **Marine conservation**
Protecting the environment has never been more important and Ocean divers should be aware of the impact of their actions.

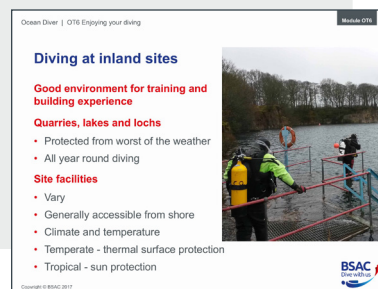
- **Wreck protection**

Divers should understand the basics of wreck protection law and the BSAC policy for their protection.

Finally you can motivate students to expand their diving experience and take the opportunity to describe the further training offered by BSAC.

Diving at inland sites

Explain that diving at inland sites can offer a range of diving conditions with year round access. Many but not all, inland sites offer gently shelving shore entries.



Good environment for training and building experience

Such sites provide multiple opportunities for divers to learn, practice and develop new skills and build experience. Some sites provide interesting dives in their own right.

Quarries, lakes and lochs

Inland diving can vary from fresh water dives at sites such as quarries and lakes, to inland sea water sites such as inlets or sea lochs.

- **Protected from worst of the weather**

By nature of their location such sites offer some protection from the vagaries of the weather allowing diving to take place at times when sea diving would be impossible.

- **All year round diving**

Typically, these sites are available to the diver all year round.

Site facilities

- **Vary**

Site facilities can vary. Many inland sites are designated and organised as diver training or diving centres. These normally provide excellent facilities such as car parking near to the water's edge, showers, food and drink, breathing gas filling stations, emergency rescue boats and diver first-aid facilities. However, other venues may have no facilities whatsoever and divers have to be totally self-sufficient to dive there.

- **Generally accessible from shore**

Access to the shore from which diving is to take place needs to be checked. If it is private land, permission may be needed to allow diving to take place, but most sites used by divers have public access.

Climate and temperature

Depending where in the world you are diving you will need some protection from the elements. This is true whatever the type of diving and the diving platform involved.

- **Temperate regions - thermal protection**

When diving in temperate regions, you need to stay warm by wearing appropriate warm clothing before and after diving particularly if there are no facilities on site.

- **Tropical regions - sun protection**

When diving in tropical regions, sunscreen and protective clothing are needed to prevent sunburn when on the surface. A lightweight suit also protects against underwater hazards such as venomous creatures. Also ensure sufficient fluids are taken to prevent dehydration.

Diving at inland sites (2)

- **Generally good**

Generally, because they are reasonably protected from the weather, inland sites offer good surface conditions with very little wave action.

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Diving at inland sites (2)

Surface conditions

- Generally good


Underwater conditions

- Vary depending on site
- Currents can be present
- Water temperature colder than sea

Inland sites not 'easy option'

- Can be dark
- Can be deep



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Underwater conditions

- **Vary depending on site**

The conditions underwater can vary depending on the nature of the inland site. Quarries and lakes, because of the lack of water movement, tend to become silty, particularly on the bottom. Divers need good buoyancy control to prevent stirring up this silty layer. The more divers using a dive site, the greater the reduction in visibility that may be experienced. You can also experience lower viz following rain, when water carrying sediment drains into the quarry or lake.

- **Currents can be present**

Sea inlet sites may experience currents as the tide rises and falls, filling and emptying the inlet. Currents are a horizontal movement of water and their impact on diving is discussed later in this module.

- **Water temperature often colder than sea**

At many inland sites, the water temperature will be colder than that experienced in the sea at the same time of year. Lakes filled from fresh water springs can be cold even in the summer.

Inland sites not an 'easy option'

Divers should not be lulled into assuming that inland sites automatically offer an easy option.

- **Can be dark**

Because of their surroundings and the lack of water movement, these can be low viz sites.

- **Can be deep**

Some quarries and lakes drop away quickly from the shore to quite considerable depths so monitoring depth and buoyancy is important. A shore dive does not automatically mean a shallow dive.

Diving in the sea

Sea dives offer a huge range of diving opportunities, including wreck and reef diving, each offering a unique combination of marine life.

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Diving in the sea


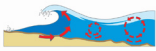
Also a good environment for training and building experience


Site facilities

- Vary
- Boat or shore access

Surface conditions

- Waves formed by wind
- Wave heights increase in shallow water
- ? safe entry and exit
- Seasickness

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Also a good environment for training and building experience

The sea also provides multiple opportunities for divers to learn, practice and develop new skills and build experience.

Site facilities

- **Vary**

Site facilities at the seaside can vary. Many dive sites may have no facilities whatsoever and divers have to be totally self-sufficient to dive these sites. However, some sites are organised as diver training or diving centres. In such case facilities may be extensive, with boat access, easy car parking, food and drink, breathing gas filling stations and accommodation for longer trips.

- **Boat or shore access**

Some sea dives can be made directly from the shore or beach, but many more can be dived from a boat, allowing you to travel further afield and reach sites not accessible from the shore.

Climate and temperature

Explain to students that the advice given for inland diving also applies when diving at the coast.

Surface conditions

- **Waves formed by wind**

The sea is exposed not only to local weather conditions but also to the effects of weather from many, many miles away. Wind travels across the vast expanse of the sea and pushes on the surface forming waves. Wave heights increase with an increase in wind strength.

- **Wave heights increase in shallow water**

Wave heights increase as they meet shallow water. This could be a reef out at sea or the shore.

- **Waves may prevent safe entry and exit**

Wave size affects the safety of entering and exiting the water. When shore diving, breaking waves can increase the difficulty of walking in and out of the water. While for boat-diving it can be easy to jump off a boat but rough waves can make exits up ladders extremely difficult or even hazardous.

- **Seasickness**

For some divers an unfortunate side effect of being at sea, particularly on a boat, is seasickness. Sitting or standing, preferably in fresh air, near to the centre of a boat where its movement is less and looking up at a fixed point on the horizon, can help. The boat's movement generates conflict between what you can see and what the sensitive balance organs in the inner ear sense: this causes seasickness in susceptible individuals. The balance organs can adapt to the movement so after a short time some people get their 'sea legs'.

If you are feeling seasick you should not dive.

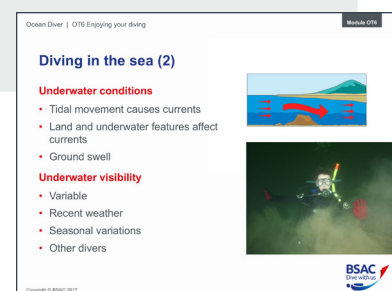
Diving in the sea (2)

Underwater conditions

Conditions at sea can vary considerably.

- **Tidal movement**

As the tides rise and fall, the seawater moves horizontally backwards and forwards causing currents to flow. Wise divers go with the current - trying to swim against a current increases physical effort and breathing rates and can become very tiring.



If diving in a current, divers should remain aware of their surroundings and take care to avoid drifting beyond the intended dive site as they may find that they cannot return to the shore or boat.

- **Land and underwater features affect currents**

The speed of this water movement is variable, and it is affected by land and underwater features. Water may need to “squeeze” between objects, which will increase the current locally, or deflect around features, causing the current to change direction.

- **Ground swell**

Divers on the seabed may experience an underwater ‘surge’ when diving. This happens when waves pass overhead. It tends to be a backwards and forwards motion and can be a little disconcerting at times. It can cause sea sickness in sensitive individuals. The easiest way to cope with ground swell is to fin with the forward swell and relax on the backward swell.

Underwater visibility

- **Variable**

The viz can vary from day to day on the same dive site - this is what makes diving so interesting, you very rarely experience exactly the same conditions on the same site.

- **Recent weather**

Recent weather has an effect on wave action, which may churn up the seabed reducing the viz. Heavy rain may drain off the land carrying sediments with it.

- **Seasonal variations**

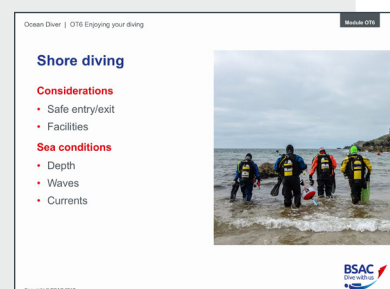
The sea has its seasons, as does the land. There are times of the year when microscopic life called plankton ‘blooms’. This clouds the water and although highly attractive as a rich food source for marine life, it does reduce the viz.

- **Other divers**

For popular dive sites where the seabed is silty, the effect of other divers disturbing the bottom can, unfortunately, also reduce the viz.

Shore diving

Beach or shore diving can be a rewarding experience and is a good starting place to build experience of sea diving. Some divers prefer this type of diving as it avoids the need for the use of boats and the associated sea sickness.



Considerations

- **Safe entry/exit**

It is not only waves that affect entry and exit from the water. In some areas, the rise and fall of the tide may mean that an entry is easy at high water but, when the tide falls, the exit becomes difficult or impossible. For example, rocky entries and exits present a challenge at the best of times but if the tide falls during a dive, you may not be able to get back up onto the rocks.

- **Facilities**

Coastal dive centres offer most facilities that a diver needs and can provide details of the local shore dives.

Sea conditions

- **Depth**

Shore diving can offer a range of depths; it is not always shallow as it depends on the local underwater topography.

- **Waves**

The type of coastline and wave action will determine whether entry and exits are possible.

- **Currents**

Currents generally run parallel to the shoreline. Shore diving requiring return to the entry point should only be undertaken if currents are weak. Divers can, with experience, dive with the current going one way and as it turns around, return to entry point. Get it wrong and it's a long walk back to the car.

Small boat diving

Two types of small boat are most commonly used for diving

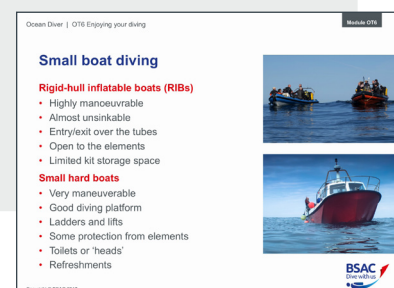
Rigid-hull inflatable boats (RIBs)

RIBs have rigid hulls with air-filled tubes on top to support the hull in the water. RIBs are manufactured in various sizes and can generally carry from six to 12 divers.

They are normally:

- **Highly manoeuvrable**

Allows close approach to sites such a cliffs or rock pinnacles, which wouldn't be possible in a large boat.



- **Almost unsinkable**
They are an almost unsinkable diving platform (the Royal National Lifeboat Institution uses RIBs as inshore lifeboats).
- **Entry/exit over the tubes**
Entry and exit to and from the water is normally over the tubes, although some larger RIBs may have a ladder.
- **Open to the elements**
They are usually open boats and therefore exposed to the elements. Again there are some larger vessels that do have some cover.
- **Limited kit storage space**
RIBs usually have cylinder racks, where scuba kit can be stowed, but otherwise they have limited kit storage space so divers may need to carry other equipment aboard in small dive bags.

Small hard boats

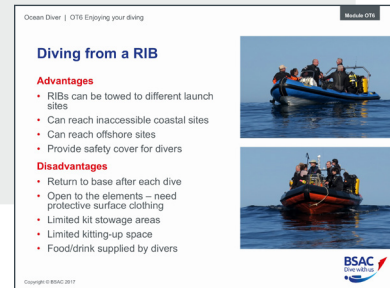
Small hard boats can vary in size but generally will carry 10 to 12 divers.

They are normally:

- **Very manoeuvrable**
Like RIBs, day charter vessels are highly manoeuvrable.
- **Good diving platform**
Hard boats are a good solid diving platform with ample kitting-up space, usually seated at benches on deck. Entries are made by rolling off the side or striding through a gate in the side or stern of the boat.
- **Ladders and lifts**
On many smaller boats you will get back into the boat by climbing a ladder. Powered diver lifts have become increasingly popular: reducing effort, risk of inducing DCI and simplifying diver recovery in emergency situations.
- **Some protection from elements**
Most have a small cabin area that offers some protection from the elements and dry clothes storage. Some larger boats may have a bigger cabin area.
- **Toilets or heads**
Hard boats often have 'heads', the nautical term for a toilet.
- **Refreshments**
Most small hard boats have kettles and provide hot drinks before and after diving. Some will also offer hot snacks.

Diving from a RIB

Explain that RIBs are commonly used by BSAC branches, BSAC centres and many commercial dive operations.



Advantages

- **RIBs can be towed to different launch sites**
RIBs can be towed to different launch sites. Wherever there is a suitable launch site, they offer great flexibility in choice of dive sites.
- **Reach otherwise inaccessible coastal sites**
They can reach coastal sites that can only be approached from the sea.
- **Can reach offshore sites**
With their fast speed, they can reach offshore and adventurous diving sites.
- **Provide safety cover for divers**
They act as surface cover for divers, able to patrol around the dive site.

Disadvantages

- **Return to base after each dive**
RIBs often need to return to base after each dive as there is normally only enough space for a single cylinder per diver. Being completely open to the elements, divers may return to shore to shelter from the weather between dives. Also RIBs mostly have no 'heads'.
- **Open to the elements**
As they are open to the elements, move at high speed and are restricted in space, divers in RIBs get into their dive suits before travelling to the dive site. Dry or semi-dry suits also ensure buoyancy if 'man overboard' occurs. If less buoyant forms of protective clothing are being worn, then life jackets are essential for safety.
Depending on where you are in the world, climate and temperature not only dictate thermal protection for diving, but for surface protection as well. In temperate climates a windproof jacket and hat help to reduce wind chill. In tropical climates hats, protective clothing and sunscreen provide sun protection.
- **Limited kit stowage areas**
With the restricted kit stowage areas divers have to keep equipment neatly stowed. There is often no room for large dive bags or boxes.
- **Limited kitting-up space**
Dive RIBs are usually configured to make the best use of the limited deck space, but usually only one buddy pair can kit up at any time.

- **Food/drink supplied by divers**
Food and drink has to be carried by the diver if required. It will need to be kept in a waterproof container, as there is little dry space aboard a RIB.

Diving from a small hard boat

Small hard boats are generally booked as day, weekend or week-long charters. Some commercial boats operate shuttle operations in popular locations.

Advantages

- **Can reach inaccessible coastal and offshore sites**
Like RIBs, these boats can reach inaccessible coastal or offshore sites.
- **Skipper's local knowledge**
Skippers of dive boats have local knowledge, which is invaluable for planning and carrying out diving.
- **Good deck and kitting up space**
They have good deck and kitting up space.
- **Some protection from the elements**
The dive deck is open to the elements, and there is often limited cabin protection so although divers may be able to change into their dive suits on board, protective surface clothing should be carried.
- **No need to return to base between dives**
These boats generally stay out at sea all day.
- **Provide safety cover for divers**
They can provide safety cover for divers.

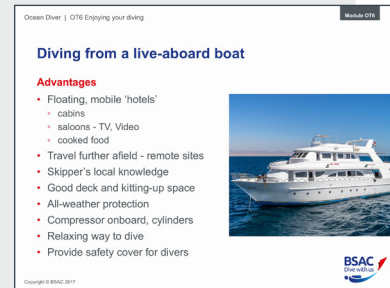
Disadvantages

- **Restricted kit stowage areas**
With the number of divers on board, although more spacious than a RIB, there may still not be enough space to spread out in, so kit should be stowed neatly in bags or boxes.
- **Need more cylinders for the day**
For a two-dive day, divers will need to ensure that can bring sufficient full cylinders at the beginning of the day.



Diving from a live-aboard boat

Live-aboard boats are generally booked for one week or longer charters. The quality and facilities on such boats varies considerably ranging from the luxurious purpose-built vessels to basic ex-fishing boats.



Advantages

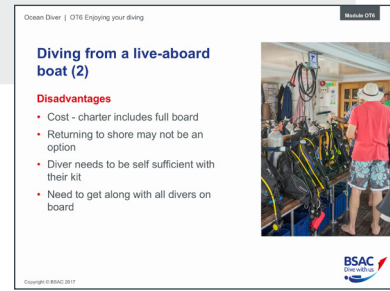
- **Floating, mobile 'hotels'**
Such boats double as a dive platform and floating accommodation with:
 - cabins
 - saloons, TV, Video
 - cooked food
- **Travel further afield to remote sites**
These larger boats have a bigger cruising range so you can travel further afield, often visiting remote and less frequently dived sites.
- **Skipper's local knowledge**
They are run by a skipper and crew who are highly knowledgeable.
- **Good deck and kitting-up space**
Live-aboard boats are often custom-designed dive boats with purpose built dive decks providing plenty of kitting up and storage space.
- **All-weather protection**
They offer all weather protection, whether in temperate or tropical climates
- **Compressor onboard, cylinders**
They have a compressor on board, some can provide nitrox, and holiday charters may well provide cylinders.
- **Relaxing way to dive**
Live-aboard diving is a relaxing way to dive - all facilities are to hand.
- **Provide safety cover for divers**
They provide safety cover for divers either from the boat itself or using a small tender.

Diving from a live-aboard boat (2)

Disadvantages

There are some disadvantages to this form of diving, including:

- **Cost - charter includes full board**
Remember the cost includes not only diving costs but also full-board accommodation.
- **Returning to shore may not be an option**
Returning to shore may not be an option, divers will be at sea for the duration of the trip.
- **Diver needs to be self sufficient with kit**
Generally, spare parts for diving kit are not readily available, so divers need to be kit self-sufficient - always worth carrying a spares box.
- **Need to get along with all divers on board**
Living and diving in close proximity, there is a need to get on with all the divers on board.



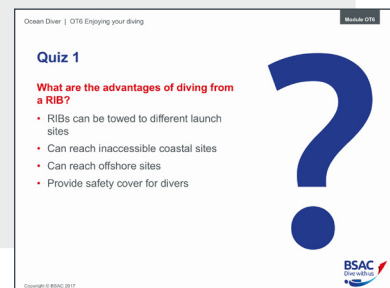
Quiz 1

Instructors should routinely check for transfer of knowledge to the students. This can be done by asking an open question such as:

What are the advantages of diving from a RIB?

Possible correct answers include:

- **RIBs can be towed to different launch sites**
- **Can reach inaccessible coastal sites**
- **Can reach offshore sites**
- **Provide safety cover for divers**



Reef diving

Reefs exist in both temperate and tropical waters, and both offer divers a wide range of exciting sites to explore.

Attractions

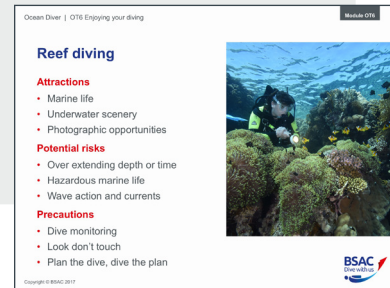
The main attractions of such sites are:

- **Marine life**
Both tropical and temperate water reefs provide a haven for marine life and give those with an interest, excellent opportunities for observing wildlife.
- **Underwater scenery**
Reefs can be spectacular to look at with colourful marine life and interesting structures.
- **Photographic opportunities**
If interested in underwater photography, reefs offer wonderful opportunities because of the variety of marine life.

Potential risks

Some of the additional risks when diving reefs are:

- **Over extending depth or time**
With good visibility and so much to see, there is always the risk of over extending your depth and time. Careful monitoring of depth/time is necessary.
- **Hazardous marine life**
Some marine life is hazardous, particularly if divers touch or antagonise it. As part of dive planning, a wise diver seeks local knowledge.
- **Wave action and currents**
As reefs can rise up from the seabed to shallow water, feeling the effects of wave action and currents is common when reef diving. With currents, remember it is easier to go with the flow. Floating along a reef in a gentle current is like being on a moving walkway. Listen carefully to the dive brief to be sure that drifting with a current will be safe. Note that you are more likely to feel cold on a drift dive going with the current, as you are not finning very much.



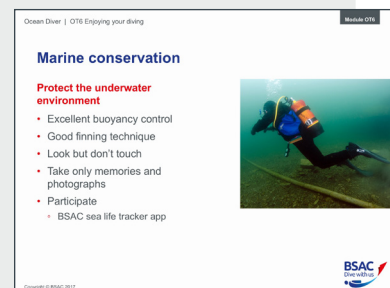
Precautions

The risks can be mitigated as follows:

- **Dive monitoring**
Good buddy diving practices can minimise the majority of the risk, by careful monitoring of depth, time.
- **Look don't touch**
Don't touch marine creatures, they may sting or bite.
- **Plan the dive, dive the plan**
It is best to adhere to the dive plan. Decisions made underwater can often lead to other problems.

Marine conservation

With the increase in diving as a sport, marine conservation has become very important so that other divers can experience the marine life you are looking at now, in the future.



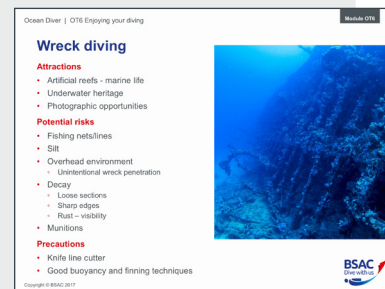
Protect the underwater environment

As divers there are a number of things that we can do to help protect the environment.

- **Excellent buoyancy control**
Excellent buoyancy control is necessary. Divers should not land on areas where marine life is present, or grab hold of reef structures, or other marine life.
- **Good finning technique**
Careful finning action is necessary, not only to prevent physical damage to the marine life, but also to avoid kicking up the seabed, which can cause sediment to drift onto marine life and damage it.
- **Look but don't touch**
Look but don't touch - a diver holding onto marine life can damage it irreparably.
- **Take only memories and photographs**
Take nothing from the sea. The only things a diver should take are memories or photographs.
- **Participate – sea life tracker app**
There are lots of ways you can get actively involved.
 - **BSAC Sealife Tracker app**
Why not try downloading the BSAC Sealife Tracker app for your phone?

Wreck diving

Most parts of the world will have some wrecks that can be visited by divers. Many will be casualties of war or accident involving the loss of life so they should always be treated with respect.



Attractions

For many, diving wrecks is the main reason to go diving. The main attractions are:

- **Artificial reefs - marine life**
Wrecks on the seabed develop to become man-made reefs and, depending on location and depth, attract a wide variety of marine life.
- **Underwater heritage**
They represent a period in history and are part of our maritime heritage, resting on the seabed. Knowing the story behind the sinking of a given ship can add to the whole experience of the dive.
- **Photographic opportunities**
The size, structure and shapes of a wreck together with the marine life that has colonised it, can offer unique photographic opportunities for those interested in underwater photography. Light shining through openings in the wreck can provide the divers with some tremendous scenes.

Potential risks

Wrecks, like reefs, come with their own set of new diving challenges.

Some of the additional risks that may occur, when diving wrecks include:

- **Fishing nets/lines**
Some wrecks, because of the fish life in and around them, are festooned with fishermen's nets and lines. Divers should always be vigilant.
- **Silt and rust**
Depending on their location and age, disturbing accumulated silt can suddenly reduce the viz. Rust particles build up in and around wrecks. These can be easily disturbed by divers' fins and can quickly reduce viz to zero.
- **Unintentional wreck penetration**
Wrecks will often have large sections of over-hanging metal which divers may on occasion swim under or through. This is known as an overhead environment as it prevents a diver making a direct ascent to the surface. Such situations should be generally avoided by Ocean Divers. One particular hazard that should

be avoided is accidentally swimming into the interior of a wreck. This requires specialised training and should not be attempted by Ocean Divers. Wreck penetration can be very dangerous.

- **Sharp edges and loose sections**

The major risk in diving wrecks is the result of the natural decay that they undergo, which divers should be aware of.

Pieces of suspended wreckage may fall unexpectedly causing injury or entrapment.

Rusting metal can readily cause cuts and abrasions.

- **Munitions**

Some wrecks contain dangerous cargoes or live munitions. Don't disturb them or bring them ashore.

Precautions

When diving wrecks, divers should consider the following precautions:

- **Knife / line cutter**

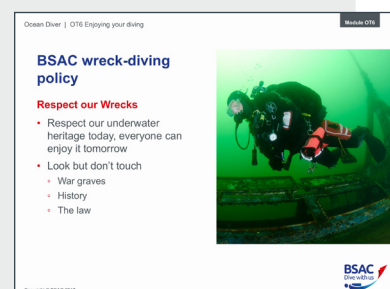
Divers should always carry a sharp knife or specialised line cutter. Beware that many traditional knives are very poor at cutting line and ropes.

- **Good buoyancy and finning techniques**

On wrecks divers need to maintain excellent control of their buoyancy to avoid impacts with sharp metal. Divers should also avoid crawling along the bottom and kicking up silt with aggressive fin kicks.

BSAC wreck-diving policy

The recovery of 'treasure' from wrecks has been a feature of much wreck exploration over the years. Today a more enlightened approach is being taken to preserve our underwater heritage in situ. Together with other diving agencies and the Receiver of Wreck, part of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency, BSAC supports a wreck-protection policy with the Respect our Wrecks initiative.



Respect our Wrecks

This policy is to protect wrecks and leave them undisturbed for others to enjoy.

- **Respect our underwater heritage today, everyone can enjoy it tomorrow**

- **Look but don't touch**

Adopt a 'look but don't touch' approach and leave the site as you found it.

- **War graves**

Many wrecks are also war graves. Treat them with the respect you would give a churchyard.

- **History**

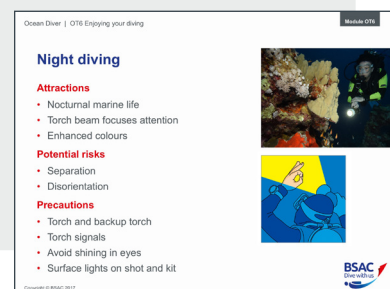
Many wrecks have an important history and hold clues to our maritime past. If you find anything, report it to the Receiver of Wreck, who will pass on such information to archaeological experts.

- **The law**

Know and respect maritime laws - and avoid a criminal record. Note: In the UK, if any item of wreckage (generically called 'wreck') is found and brought back to the surface, it is the law that it must be declared to the Receiver of Wreck.

Night diving

It may seem strange to consider diving at night when it is dark both above and below the surface, but there are good reasons for it.



Attractions

Some of the main attractions of diving at night are:

- **Nocturnal marine life**

Diving at night enables divers to see a different range of marine creatures and many commonly seen animals exhibit completely different behaviour at night, for example the feeding behaviour of reef sharks.

- **Torch beam focuses attention**

Using a torch on a night dive focuses the diver's attention on what they can see within the beam of light.

- **Enhanced colours**

Underwater colours are enhanced by the torch light.

Potential risks

Like wreck and reef diving, night diving brings its own set of potential risks including:

- **Separation**
It is easier to lose your buddy in the reduced area of visibility provided by torch beams.
- **Disorientation**
It is easier to become disoriented when your vision and therefore your reference points are reduced.

Precautions

The main precautions that can be taken to mitigate these risks include:

- **Torch and backup torch**
When diving at night, a torch is required by each diver for illumination, and a backup light should also be carried in case of failure of the main torch. If the backup has to be used, abort the dive.
- **Torch signals**
In the dark it is necessary to shine your torch beam on your hand to illuminate your signals. The emergency signal becomes a rapid movement of the torch beam from side to side. The OK signal can be drawing a circle on a surface with your torch beam.
- **Avoid shining in eyes**
Avoid shining your torch directly at your buddy, as they will lose their night vision.
- **Surface lights on shot and kit**
It is essential to mark reference points such as the entry and exit point with lights at night. To mark divers on the surface, so that surface cover can see them, divers can attach light sticks to themselves or their equipment. On a night boat dive it's essential to mark the shot line with a light, usually a strobe.

Holiday diving

Many divers will do the majority of their diving while on holiday away from their BSAC branch or centre. Some of the practices in these locations may differ from what students have become used to during training.

Ocean Diver | D16 Enjoying your diving Module 026

Holiday diving

General points

- Check out dives
- Holiday insurance: limits
- Be aware of local regulations

Diving with other dive organisations


- Different agencies use different signals
- Group diving
- Q-card and log book

Relaxing

- Avoid recreational drugs and alcohol
- Dehydration

Equipment

- Hire or take



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General points

In good viz and warm water, take care not to exceed your training and your personal limitations.

- **Check out dives**
A check-out dive may be required no matter what qualification or dive experience a diver presents. Don't feel insulted as this is quite normal practice: the dive centre is responsible for safety and must understand divers' current capabilities before taking them on a dive.
- **Holiday insurance: limits**
Holiday insurance policies may not cover diving, impose strict depth limits or forbid use of nitrox - ensure that you check your policy carefully or seek specialist diving travel insurance.
- **Be aware of local regulations**
Be aware of local regulations - generally divers are clearly briefed when they sign up for diving.

Diving with other dive organisations

If students go on a diving holiday outside the branch or centre they have trained with, they will meet divers from other diving organisations. There may be some differences in dive practice.

- **Different agencies use different signals**
Some diving signals may be slightly different. This is not a problem as long as the pre-dive briefing is clear.
- **Group diving**
On warm-water holiday trips diving in large groups is common. Remember to apply principles of buddy diving and the need to be careful to look out for each other. Don't be afraid to question your buddy to understand their experience and don't be offended if they ask you.
- **Q-card and logbook**
Ensure you take your qualification record and log book or you may not be able to dive.

Relaxing

- **Avoid recreational drugs and alcohol**
Drinking and diving has an impact on thought processes in a similar way to nitrogen narcosis - and with narcosis a possibility when diving, drinking and diving in effect doubles the dose.

- **Dehydration**

Heat causes dehydration - remember to drink lots of water or non-caffeinated soft drinks. Alcohol dehydrates the body as well.

Equipment

- **Hire or take**

Cylinders and weight belts are generally hired. Although other equipment can be hired, it is better to be self-sufficient with your own kit. If you do hire a regulator, ensure you also hire an octopus. Check carefully that all hired equipment works as you would expect.

Holiday snorkelling

If the viz is good and the water a suitable depth, then divers may also take the opportunity to go snorkelling. This may be on a reef or a wreck site. You will need to go through exactly the same process as for scuba diving from the same platform, be it the shore, a small boat or a live-aboard boat.

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Module 026

Holiday snorkelling

Same considerations as for

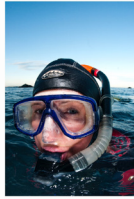
- Shore diving
- Small-boat diving
- Live-aboard diving
- Reef diving

Snorkel buddy diving

- One up, one down

Tropical snorkelling

- Sunburn protection even when in water



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Same considerations as for

- **Shore diving**
- **Small-boat diving**
- **Live-aboard diving**
- **Reef diving**

Snorkel buddy diving

Snorkelling in a buddy pair is good practice.

- **One up, one down**

As a general rule, snorkellers should follow the practice of 'one up, one down' when making breath-hold dives. This means that only one person at a time actually dives. The buddy remains on the surface and keeps an eye on the snorkeller who is down. The reason for this practice is safety. So should one diver become entangled underwater, or stay too long and need support and assistance on reaching the surface, the buddy is in a fit state to provide help.

Tropical snorkelling

- **Sunburn protection even when in water**

In tropical conditions, snorkellers should be aware that protection against sunburn is very important. If a lot of time is spent on the surface, the snorkeller is getting a great deal of sunshine on their body even though they may not feel it because of the cooling effect of the water. It is very easy to get extremely sunburnt so wear waterproof suntan cream on exposed areas. Better still wear a T-shirt or thin suit for extra protection.

Progressing your diving

Now that we are coming to the end of the Ocean Diver course it is time to think about what comes next.



Go diving

- **Have fun**
- **Gain experience**
- **Develop skills**
- **Increase confidence and awareness**
- **Dive with different people**

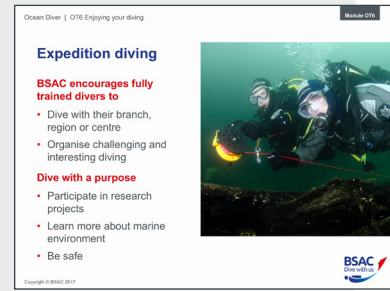
Further training

Divers should look to maintain and develop their personal skills. Some of the options are:

- **Sports Diver qualification**
The next step in diver training is the Sports Diver course, which builds and expands your diving skills and knowledge for more adventurous diving.
- **Skill Development Courses (SDCs)**
As an Ocean Diver you can attend BSAC Skill Development Courses (SDCs), including:
 - Buoyancy and trim workshop
 - Marine life appreciation
 - Wreck appreciation
 - Boat handling
 - And many other courses

Expedition diving

BSAC is unique in that the organisation trains divers to gain a full range of diving and dive management skills. The fully trained diver can independently plan and manage a group of divers to enjoy diving in remote and unexplored areas. You have the option to learn how to understand nautical charts and carry out navigation at sea. You have the option to learn how to drive boats and master the skills needed to boat handle when divers are in the water. You can learn about shipwrecks and their history, marine life and its biology. You have the option to learn about closed-circuit rebreathers and open-circuit technical diving, which are tools to exploring new untapped environments.



BSAC encourages fully trained divers to

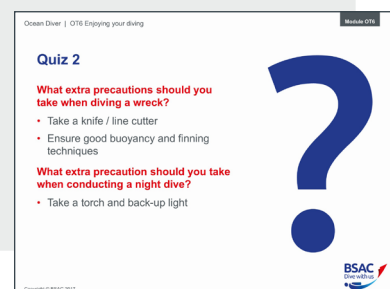
- Dive with their branch, region or school
- Organise challenging and interesting diving

Diving with a purpose

- Participate in research projects
- Learn more about marine environment
- Be safe

Quiz 2

Instructors should routinely check for transfer of knowledge to the students. This can be done by asking open questions such as:



What extra precautions should you take, when diving a wreck?

- Take a knife/line cutter
- Ensure good buoyancy and finning techniques

What extra precautions should you take when conducting a night dive?

- Take a torch and back-up light
- Mark yourself with a lightstick/strobe

Summary

Recap the module objectives and provide students with opportunity to ask questions.

The different types of diving available to Ocean Divers

- Inland sites
- Sea diving
- Diving from shore and boats
- Reef, wreck and night diving
- Holiday diving

Responsibilities

- Marine conservation
- Wreck protection

